

REMARKS

1. In response to the Office Action mailed March 18, 2010, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 13, 15-20, and claims 31-43 were last presented for examination. In the outstanding Office Action, claims 13, 15-20, 31-33 and 35 were rejected, claims 36-43 were allowed, and claim 34 was indicated as containing allowable subject matter. By the foregoing Amendments, claims 31 and 35 have been amended, claims 32 and 34 have been canceled, and no claims have been added. Thus, upon entry of this paper, claims 13, 15-20, 31, 33 and 35-43 will be pending in this application. Of these eighteen (18) claims, two (2) claims (claims 31 and 43) are independent.

2. Based upon the following Remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that all outstanding rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Applicant thanks Examiner Hopkins for allowing claims 36-43, and for indicating that claim 34 would be allowable if placed into independent form. In reliance on this indication, Applicant has amended independent claim 31 to include the recitations of claim 34 and claim 32 (from which claim 34 depends) into claim 31, thus effectively placing claim 34 into independent form. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 31 (previously pending claim 34) is now allowable for the pertinent reasons that prompted the USPTO to indicate that previously pending claim 34 was allowable.

Claim Rejections under §103

4. Claims 13, 15-19, 31 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Lenhardt *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,047,994) in view of Rastatter *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,961,443). Claims 20, 32 and 35 are rejected under the same statute in view of the just-mentioned combination when further combined with Leysieffer *et al.* (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0172102). In response, in order to advance prosecution, and without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant has amended claim 31 to include the recitations of claim 34 and 32 (from which claim 34 depended). As claim 34 was indicated as containing allowable

subject matter, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are now moot, as every claim now pending contains subject matter indicated as being allowable.

Dependent Claims

5. The dependent claims incorporate all the subject matter of their respective independent claims and add additional subject matter which makes them independently patentable over the art of record. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that the dependent claims are also allowable over the art of record.

Conclusion

6. In view of the foregoing, this application should be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

7. Applicant reserves the right to pursue any canceled claims or other subject matter disclosed in this application in a continuation or divisional application. Any cancellations and amendments of above claims, therefore, are not to be construed as an admission regarding the patentability of any claims and Applicant reserves the right to pursue such claims in a continuation or divisional application.

Dated: June 18, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Michael G. Verga/

Michael G. Verga

Registration No.: 39,410

CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP

1875 Eye Street, NW

Suite 1100

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 331-7111

(202) 293-6229 (Fax)

Attorney for Applicant